



Twinkle Tots Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	141880
Inspection date	07 March 2007
Inspector	Sylvia June Crawford
Setting Address	Small Meeting Place, Glovers Lane, Heelands, Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire, MK13 7LW
Telephone number	07749051693
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Registered person	Twinkle Tots Playgroup
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day care

ABOUT THIS INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality of childcare and, if applicable, of nursery education. The inspection was carried out under Part XA Children Act 1989 as introduced by the Care Standards Act 2000 and, where nursery education is provided, under Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004; the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding; and, where nursery education is provided, the *Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration or 1 April 2004 whichever is the later.

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

For more information about early years inspections, please see the booklet *Are you ready for your inspection?* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Twinkle Tots Playgroup has been established for over 20 years and re-registered in their present location in 2001. It operates from a community hall in Heelands, north of Milton Keynes city centre. The group is managed by a committee of volunteers who are mainly parents of children in the group. A maximum of 32 children may attend the group at any one time. The playgroup is open each weekday from 09.15 to 14.45. The pre-school offers both sessional and full day care. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 49 children from two to under five years on roll. Of these, 42 children receive funding for nursery education. Children attend from the local and surrounding areas. The group currently supports some children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and also supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

The playgroup employs nine members of staff, some working part time. Five staff members have relevant early years qualifications and the others are working towards qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children stay healthy because staff follow current environmental health and hygiene guidelines, policies and procedures. Children are beginning to understand simple good health and hygiene practices; they wash their hands after using the toilet and before eating. Older children know they are washing their hands because of 'germs' and follow these routines without being reminded. Children are learning good self-care skills and through planned themes they are becoming more aware of their bodies, for example, they know they feel hot when they are exercising. The provision safeguards and promotes children's welfare through staffs knowledge and experience in first aid and sick child procedures.

All children have extremely good opportunities to develop physical skills and this contributes to their good health. The children learn to ride bikes, to play with balls, to push buggies and practise skills of balancing and jumping. The outside area is currently being resurfaced and the children are looking forward to a bigger, soft surface where they will be able to develop their fine and gross motor skills. Children also have the opportunity to do physical education indoors where they enjoy the experience of changing into shorts and t-shirts, which encourages independence.

Staff ensure they have sufficient information from parents so they can meet the individual dietary needs of each child. Snacks are offered as a rolling programme for small groups of children and consequently they enjoy a social occasion and good interaction with staff. They are offered a healthy range of snacks, which includes fresh and dried fruit as well as cereal, beans on toast and raw vegetable with dips. Drinks are readily available and children choose whether they would prefer to drink milk or water. Staff advise parents to provide healthy food in their child's lunchbox and children are encouraged to eat the healthy options first before sweet things. Lunch boxes are stored appropriately.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in premises that are welcoming, secure and child-orientated. The premises are light, airy and well decorated and children's artwork is on display in all areas contributing to their sense of achievement. Children use the areas available to them confidently and are able to select from a wide range of good quality toys and equipment. Resources are suitable and sufficient for the age and developmental stage of children in the playgroup and staff check them regularly to ensure that they remain safe and are stored appropriately.

Risks of accidental injury are minimised because staff are vigilant and use daily checks and risk assessments to reduce hazards, especially when taking the children on trips and walks. The premises are secure and staff and parents are clear about the procedure that is in place for

children's arrival and departure. They work together to ensure that the procedure is implemented to assure children's safety. Staff remind children about possible dangers and they are learning to keep themselves safe, for example, not to run around with laces undone and to sit on chairs properly not to kneel or stand. Children practise fire drills and have a good understanding of what to do in an emergency. However, these are not always recorded to ensure consistency.

Children are protected because the management have a good understanding of the procedures to follow if they have child protection issues. Staff are clear about lines of communication for dealing with concerns about a child but not all staff are confident in their knowledge and understanding of child protection. Parents are aware of the role and responsibility of staff through the well written policy. This ensures children's welfare is safeguarded.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Staff have a high regard for the wellbeing of all children, giving good levels of individual support, care and concern. Consequently, children form good relationships with the adults and other children within the group and play happily together. They enjoy their time in the playgroup and staff support them to learn and play in the carefully structured environment. Staff demonstrate a very caring attitude towards all children and are attentive to individual care needs. They are skilled at settling children and reassuring parents, this means that children are comfortable in the setting and enjoy a well established routine. Staff help develop children's sense of self-esteem with consistent praise. Children show an interest in what they do, ask questions, use initiative and communicate well, talking to adults with confidence and involving them in their play. Children are learning to distinguish between right and wrong, for example following rules, taking turns and sharing.

The preschool is making good use of the Birth to three matters framework to ensure that the younger children are provided with a wide range of suitable activities and care that incorporate all elements of their development. The group share this information with parents verbally, in written form and through displays.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are making good progress in all areas of learning and benefit from positive interaction and good use of staff questioning during free play and activities. Staff have a good understanding and knowledge of the stepping stones and early learning goals and how children develop and learn. Planning is very effective and ensures that all areas of learning are included each day. It meets children's individual needs because the key workers know their group of children very well and provide activities to ensure their progress. Children's achievements are linked to the stepping-stones and staff use several types of observation to record and evaluate children's progress and to determine future plans. There are clear learning objectives set for adult led activities and staff are able to ensure that individual children's abilities are met.

Children show a sense of belonging as they greet each other and the staff on arrival. They are eager to do activities; they concentrate well and listen attentively. Children have free access

to all resources and enjoy making choices. They have the opportunity to explore new experiences, for example, smelling different substances and trying to guess what they are and sounding out the letter they begin with. They enjoy listening to music, singing familiar songs and joining in with action songs in the larger group. Children have free access to books and handle them with care both in groups and alone. They participate enthusiastically at story time and enjoy the anticipation of a well known story. They take books home each week to share with their family. Children make good use of the home corner, dressing up clothes and the puppets/theatre; consequently they are developing and extending their imagination.

Children are beginning to develop a sense of time and place through discussing and exploring past, present and future events. For example, staff discuss with the children what they did at the week end and what the new outside area will be like when it is finished. They are developing an interest in their wider community, for example, through walks to their local shops and to the woods. Staff encourage children's language skills on all levels and skilfully support children who have English as an additional language to develop their vocabulary.

Most children know their primary colours and they have access to a variety of activities to help them develop their creative play, for example, painting, drawing and play dough. They are gaining good levels of hand/eye co-ordination through activities that allow them to use tools and smaller pieces of equipment such as scissors and shape cutters. Children have every day opportunities for them to find and recognise their own names. For example, at registration they find their name to put it into a drawer linked to their key worker symbol. They use the writing area to make marks and recreate simple patterns such as a circle. However, there are limited resources made available to enable the children to practise their reading and writing skills during free play activities. A computer is available to support their understanding of technology and it is used and enjoyed on a daily basis.

Children are developing their counting skills and there are resources available each day to enable children to develop their mathematical skills. They are encouraged to do simple calculation through singing and adding numbers at registration time. Children can confidently recognise different shapes, for example, one child held up a large crisp at lunch time and said it was heart shaped. Children have regular everyday opportunities to enjoy physical and/or outside play. They can ride on bikes, jump, hop and play with balls. Children learn about control and co-ordination through stimulating rhythm, dance and music activities.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children form excellent relationships; their confidence is evident in the way they interact with each other, the staff and other adults. Children learn to respect one another's views and are introduced to different cultures beliefs and traditions. For example children participate in activities related to Diwali and Chinese New Year, and they look at how other cultures celebrate New Year. They have access to a wide range of equipment, which promote positive images of diversity in the wider world. Children are beginning to be aware of their local community as they visit the shops and go on walks to the woods. They also benefit from close ties with the local school where they are invited to Christmas plays and sports days.

Committed staff have excellent procedures in place to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and their families. They ensure that all children are included in activities and treated with equal respect. Several children attend with English as an additional language and staff work closely with the parents to help children feel secure within the setting. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children's behaviour is extremely good. Staff manage children's behaviour very positively and children are helped sensitively to understand what is acceptable. Staff are very good role models; they remain calm and patient and help children to learn self-discipline and consideration of others in a nurturing environment. Children are encouraged to share and have respect for one another in the playgroup, for example, they listen to instructions carefully and all help to clear away before snack and lunchtime.

Partnership with parents is outstanding. Parents are made extremely welcome into the setting and feel very much supported by staff. They have very good relationships with key workers and this positive relationship reinforces children's sense of belonging and ensures their confidence in the setting. They receive comprehensive information about the setting, the nursery education and the care their child receives. Excellent communication, through newsletters, written reports and parents' evenings, ensures parents are very well informed and involved in their child's learning. This helps staff and parents work together to promote children's progress. Parents are encouraged to take an active part in their child's learning as they bring in items for the interest table and share books from the playgroup.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The very good organisation of the setting, the staff ratio and deployment of staff all contribute to children's good health, safety and enjoyment. The key worker system works extremely well; it provides the children with a sense of belonging, ensures that their individual needs are met and that they are all making good progress. The recruitment and vetting procedure ensure children are well protected and are cared for by staff with knowledge and understanding of child development. The induction procedure is good and ensures staff are clear about their roles in the setting and are able to act in the interest of children's welfare and safety. The operational plan is a comprehensive working document and along with the policies and procedures is reviewed annually.

All required records are in place and shared appropriately with parents. The necessary documentation is well organised and easily accessible. Staff obtain all necessary children's information and keep it secure to ensure children's confidentiality. However, not all fire records are kept up to date.

Leadership and Management is good. This contributes to children's good progress towards the early learning goals. The dedicated staff are very well motivated and work co-operatively together. They have regular staff meetings and work very well as a team to promote children's enjoyment at the setting. They have annual appraisals and individual training development plans and are supported by the committee to attend on going training. The manager and the committee have a very good understanding of their roles and responsibilities and a commitment

to develop the playgroup. They support staff both professionally and personally. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection the group were asked to review the system for recording the times children arrived and departed the group to make it clearer. Have a second member of staff sign as witness when children are given medication in the group. Amend complaints procedure to include Ofsted's details and amend the child protection policy to include the procedure to follow in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff.

Since the last inspection the committee have amended the policies and updated them to include the necessary information. Medical sheets evidence that two members of staff sign when medication is administered and the register clearly shows the times that children arrive and depart from the group.

At the last nursery education inspection the group were asked to improve the opportunity for children to use the computer on a more frequent basis. Improve the observational recording of children's attainment so that ongoing progress can be more easily identified through the relevant Foundation Stage stepping stones.

Since the last inspection the group ensure that the computer is available for children to use every day. They make regular observations of children and these are recorded in their individual developmental files identifying progress through the Foundation Stage stepping stones. This information is used in future planning.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since April 2004 there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards.

The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- ensure that all fire drills are clearly recorded
- develop staff's knowledge and understanding of child protection procedures

The quality and standards of the nursery education

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- ensure children have the opportunity to practise writing skills during free play activities.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Complaints about Ofsted Early Years: concerns or complaints about Ofsted's role in regulating and inspecting childcare and early education (HMI ref no 2599)* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk